



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES
PO BOX 360
TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0360

JON S. CORZINE
Governor

www.nj.gov/health

HEATHER HOWARD, J.D.
Commissioner

January 25, 2008

HEALTH BULLETIN

TO: Physicians, Hospital Administrators and Emergency Departments,
Health Officers, and Directors of Community Health Centers, Health
Maintenance Organizations, STD Clinics, TB Clinics, Substance Abuse
Treatment Centers, Prenatal Clinics, Family Planning Programs, Correctional
Health Care Facilities and Primary Care Centers

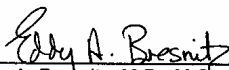
SUBJECT: Routine Screening for HIV Infection

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that there are over 1.2 million Americans infected with HIV, and at least one out of every four of them do not know it. Despite numerous educational efforts and testing campaigns, many people have not been tested, and remain unaware of their HIV status. There are numerous reasons for this including lack of information, motivational issues, and missed opportunities for testing. The result is a disturbing 40,000 new HIV infections per year nationwide for the last five years.

In September 2006 the CDC published updated guidelines that recommend the integration of HIV testing into routine medical care in all health care settings for persons aged 13 to 64, including pregnant women. These recommendations promote the provision of "opt-out" testing, where an individual can choose not to be tested, and remove the recommendations for a separate written consent for an HIV test, as well as for dedicated pre- and post-test counseling. In addition, legislation was enacted in New Jersey in December 2007 which requires health care providers to test pregnant women for HIV as part of routine medical care.

In recognition that one out of every four people infected with HIV in New Jersey is unaware of their infection, and in an effort to promote the provision of HIV testing in every health care venue, the Department of Health and Senior Services fully endorses these recommendations, and calls upon all health care providers to immediately begin their implementation if they have not already done so. A summary of the CDC recommendations is enclosed for your review.

The implementation and operationalization of routine testing in all health care settings are critical if we are to further reduce the transmission of HIV disease in New Jersey, and enhance the overall effort to protect the health of the public. Your contribution to this effort is most appreciated.


Eddy A. Bresnitz, M.D., M.S.
Deputy Commissioner/State Epidemiologist

Enclosure